



CITY OF LONG BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

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PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER

March 26, 2009

Sam Schuchat
Ocean Protection Council Secretary
Coastal Conservancy Executive Officer
Ocean Protection Council
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Support for the Completion of a Master Environmental Assessment (MEA) on single-use (plastic and paper) and reusable bags

Dear Secretary Schuchat and Members of the California Ocean Protection Council:

The City of Long Beach supports the California Ocean Protection in its efforts to complete a Master Environmental Assessment (MEA) on single-use plastic and paper bags and reusable bags. The City of Long Beach is still considering whether or not to pursue a ban on single-use bags, however, the MEA will be helpful if our City chooses to institute a ban. This MEA will provide the necessary background information for California municipalities to quickly complete Environmental Impact Reports (EIR) necessary for the development of new ordinances placing restrictions on usage of the single-use bags.

Many California cities are in the process of developing programs and ordinances intended to minimize or eliminate single-use bags through the adoption of bans on plastic bags and, in some cases, fees on paper bags. However, a ruling issued February 20, 2009, in Los Angeles County on a challenge under CEQA to a municipal plastic bag ban now requires that municipalities to complete an EIR before it can implement its ban.

Cities considering similar ordinances will likely be required to do the same in order to avoid the same result. Completion of an MEA on single-use bags will greatly simplify the EIR process for these cities, allowing them to incorporate the MEA into their individual EIRs, saving time and money, and facilitating the implementation of single-use bag regulations throughout the state. Thank you for considering our input.

Sincerely,

Patrick H. West
City Manager